

Claims:

1. A method for determining a physical property of an object having opposed first and second end faces and a side face extending between the first and second end faces, the method comprising
- 5 - taking a first pair of images of the first end face and of a predetermined portion of the side face of the object, so that the first pair of images allow stereo imaging of the object,
- taking a second pair of images of the second end face and of the predetermined portion of the side face of the object, so that the second pair of images
- 10 allow stereo imaging of the object,
- using the first and second pair of images for determining the physical property of the object.
- 15 2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the object is a log or a piece of processed wood.
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the predetermined portion is the upper side of the object.
- 20 4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the object is one of a plurality of objects arranged lying in a side-by-side relationship with each object having its first and second ends and the predetermined portion exposed, and each of the first and second pairs of images includes a
- 25 plurality of the objects.
5. A method according to claim 4, wherein a first series of first pairs of images is taken that allow stereo imaging of the plurality of objects, and a second series of second pairs of images is taken that allow stereo imaging of the
- 30 plurality of objects.

6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the first and second series are taken using a camera that is moved relative to the plurality of objects.
7. A method according to claim 5, wherein the first and second series are taken using a stationary camera and moving the plurality of objects relative to the camera.
8. A method according to any one of claims 1-7, wherein each pair of images is taken using a pair of cameras.
9. A method according to any one of claims 1-7, wherein each pair of images is taken using a single camera.
10. A method according to any one of claims 2-9, wherein the physical property is selected from the group comprising length, diameter, volume, shape, curvature, surface irregularities, species of tree, percentage of bark, percentage of wood, damage, percentage of rot.
11. A system for determining a physical property of an object having opposed first and second end faces and a side face extending between the first and second end faces, the system comprising
- means for taking a first pair of images of the first end face and of a predetermined portion of the side face of the object, so that the first pair of images allow stereo imaging of the object,
 - means for taking a second pair of images of the second end face and of the predetermined portion of the side face of the object, so that the second pair of images allow stereo imaging of the object,
 - means for using the first and second pair of images for determining the physical property of the object.